

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

106th Congress
1st Session

Vote No. 78

March 25, 1999, 9:00 p.m.
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BUDGET RESOLUTION/Current Services & Debt Reduction

SUBJECT: Senate Concurrent Budget Resolution for fiscal years 2000-2009 . . . S.Con. Res. 20. Hollings amendment No. 174.

ACTION: AMENDMENT REJECTED, 24-74

SYNOPSIS: As reported, S.Con. Res. 20, the Senate Concurrent Budget Resolution for fiscal years 2000-2009: will cut the debt held by the public (money that the Federal Government owes to creditors other than itself) in half over 10 years; will fully fund Medicare (all of the President's proposed \$9 billion in Medicare cuts were rejected; as a result, this budget will allow \$20.4 billion more in Medicare spending over the next 10 years); will save the entire \$1.8 trillion in Social Security surpluses over the next 10 years for Social Security; will provide for \$778 billion in net tax relief over the next 10 years (in contrast, the President's budget would increase the tax burden by \$96 billion net over 10 years), and will adhere to the spending restraints (discretionary spending caps and pay-go provisions) of the bipartisan budget agreement as enacted in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 and the Taxpayer Reform Act of 1997 (the President's proposed budget, in contrast, would dramatically increase spending in violation of that bipartisan agreement, and would result in \$2.2 trillion more in total Federal debt at the end of 10 years than proposed in this Senate budget).

The Hollings amendment would increase total spending to the current services baseline level (in some areas, such as defense, that action would result in a decrease in spending) and would strike the tax relief. The stated intent would be to reduce the debt held by the public by more than planned in this budget resolution.

Those favoring the amendment contended:

When Federal Reserve Board Chairman Greenspan appeared before the Budget Committee recently, he was asked what he thought was the best possible budget plan that could be adopted. He replied that Congress should "do nothing." In other words, we should keep exactly the same spending priorities we had last year, and we would end up with large surpluses that could be used to

(See other side)

YEAS (24)		NAYS (74)		NOT VOTING (2)	
Republicans (2 or 4%)	Democrats (22 or 49%)	Republicans (51 or 96%)	Democrats (23 or 51%)	Republicans (2)	Democrats (0)
Specter	Akaka	Abraham	Hatch	Baucus	McCain- ²
Voinovich	Biden	Allard	Helms	Bayh	Thomas- ²
	Bingaman	Ashcroft	Hutchinson	Cleland	
	Boxer	Bennett	Hutchison	Conrad	
	Breaux	Bond	Inhofe	Daschle	
	Bryan	Brownback	Jeffords	Durbin	
	Byrd	Bunning	Kyl	Edwards	
	Dodd	Burns	Lott	Feinstein	
	Dorgan	Campbell	Lugar	Johnson	
	Feingold	Chafee	Mack	Kennedy	
	Graham	Cochran	McConnell	Kerry	
	Harkin	Collins	Murkowski	Landrieu	
	Hollings	Coverdell	Nickles	Levin	
	Inouye	Craig	Roberts	Lieberman	
	Kerrey	Crapo	Roth	Moynihan	
	Kohl	DeWine	Santorum	Murray	
	Lautenberg	Domenici	Sessions	Reed	
	Leahy	Enzi	Shelby	Rockefeller	
	Lincoln	Fitzgerald	Smith, Bob	Sarbanes	
	Mikulski	Frist	Smith, Gordon	Schumer	
	Reid	Gorton	Snowe	Torricelli	
	Robb	Gramm	Stevens	Wellstone	
		Grams	Thompson	Wyden	
		Grassley	Thurmond		
		Gregg	Warner		
		Hagel			

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

1—Official Business
2—Necessarily Absent
3—Illness
4—Other

SYMBOLS:

AY—Announced Yea
AN—Announced Nay
PY—Paired Yea
PN—Paired Nay

pay down the debt. We agree. Unfortunately, Senators seem to have "visions of sugarplums dancing in their heads." They are just chock full of ideas for new spending and tax cuts. We should just reject all of those ideas in one fell swoop by taking the advice of Chairman Greenspan. The Hollings amendment gives us that opportunity. We urge our colleagues to support this amendment.

Those opposing the amendment contended:

The Hollings amendment advances a simple solution that would have disastrous results. Do our colleagues really believe our priorities this year are exactly the same as they were last year? We have a responsible, balanced budget before us, that adheres to the budget agreement on spending levels, but that still provides additional funding for high priority areas. For instance, this budget will provide additional funding for defense (which is obviously going to be sorely needed due to the attack on Serbia that began yesterday), and will also provide substantial increases in funding for education programs. Under the Hollings amendment, all of that additional spending will be wiped out, and more spending will be added for lower priority areas. The amendment, operating on autopilot, would then wipe out every cent of the proposed tax relief. Our colleague says he wants that money to be used for debt reduction. Of course, the amendment cannot lock in that use, and we are quite certain that if this amendment were to pass most of the additional hundreds of billions of dollars that would be collected in taxes would be spent. Voting for this amendment is voting for the proposition that the country is unchanged from where it was a year ago. That obviously is not true. Thanks in large part to Republicans' successful efforts to balance the budget by cutting spending, large on-budget surpluses are projected over the next 10 years. We believe that Americans deserve to get a share of those surpluses in tax relief. Therefore, we urge the rejection of this amendment.